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In this Issue:

Tom Bowen's crew placing rock in the South Platte River

~Photo by Ken Woodard

Redemption by the River

~Carol Ekarius, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP)

This article is an excerpt from the CUSP "Watershed Watch" Newsletter. EPA is currently supporting CUSP with a Targeted Watershed Grant that funds a study of river restoration following the Hayman, CO fire, management of volunteers, and capacity building.

William Dennis gets up for work each morning at 4:30 and leaves the house by 5:30. He is a trucking superintendent for American Civil Constructors of Denver, CO, a national firm that builds highway projects, water systems, utilities and golf courses. He puts in long days, often 55-hour weeks.

Talk to William and he sounds like just about any other 30-something guy who has his act together. He's excited to talk about his work; he's got a girlfriend; he's saving money and plans to buy a house soon. But William is different. He is on parole for conspiracy to commit murder. At 17, he was with a group of young men who got drunk. Trouble happened. He was there. He spent seven years behind bars, has been out of prison for five years and is on parole, with three more years on his "ticket."

What sets William Dennis apart from other convicted felons is this: William is one of the first "graduates" from a unique program that offers hope for inmates who want to change their lives. Hope that they'll have jobs with decent pay. Hope that they can stay out of the system and make a life for themselves.

The Heavy Equipment Operators Program is run out of Colorado's Buena Vista Correctional Facility. In its eighth year, 88% of the graduates have succeeded at law-abiding citizen status. The program is the brainchild, and personal mission, of Tom Bowen. Bowen is a common sense man, with little formal education, but with a commitment to change the penal system. "We are called the Department of Corrections, but that's a misnomer," he says. "We are very good at incarceration, but we're not good at correcting anyone."

His frank style earns him respect with his students, and with most bureaucrats—though some are challenged by his brutal honesty. "After my first year as a correctional officer I thought they should just 'nuke' the whole place…this is a waste of taxpayers' dollars. These guys are just coming back. But after a couple of years, I began to realize there are actually people incarcerated who've changed their way of

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thinking; they've made conscious changes within themselves, and they're not the same people anymore. They really don't want to re-offend."

The crew often works in the Upper South Platte watershed. Their most steady "employer" is the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW), who uses them for stream-habitat restoration projects, though they are also getting ready to work on several cooperative projects between the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) and the U.S. Forest Service. Due to limited funding, most of these projects simply wouldn't happen if Tom's crew wasn't there to do them. They have helped restore many, many miles of river in the past seven years.

On a spring day I visit the crew along the banks of the South Platte River, near the town of Hartsel. They are working on a project to improve habitat for trout, and to protect an area of Highway 24 that runs next to the river, which has been slowly eating away at the right-of-way. Rod Van Velson, DOW Aquatic Biologist, is on-site, supervising the work. He has worked with the crew regularly for the last six years. "By working with these guys we can try different techniques to restore the streams in South Park. We are applying 15 different treatments on this stretch of stream."

The river channel had been straightened at several points by highway crews in the past, consequently becoming shallow and wide. The slow-flow of the widened river allowed more sediment to settle along the rocky bottom, thereby reducing spawning habitat, and there were few pools and hideouts for larger trout. By narrowing the channel and installing rock and tree vanes, root wads, boulders and cobbles, the Division hopes to increase habitat for all classes of trout, while protecting the road from erosion. The narrowing essentially increases the rate of flow, which acts to cool the stream (trout are cold-water fish) as it scours existing sediment from the river bottom, yielding a gravel bed. That gravel provides habitat for the macro-invertebrates (bugs) that trout depend on for food, and provides the environment that trout need for spawning.

The crew asks Rod questions as they work: "Should we move these cobbles to allow better fish passage?" "How deep do you want this hole?" They care about the work. They take pride in what they are doing. It's the *promise* of this program that is so inspiring. Because of its success, the state is starting up similar programs at two other facilities. As crew member Jesse Ramos tells me, "There are hundreds of guys who are seeking a chance like this." Perhaps they'll get the chance to become right living, and society will be the great winner.

For more information, contact **Carol Ekarius**, (719)748-0033 **or** **carol@uppersouthplatte.net**

What Do Watershed Coordinators Do?

~Marc Alston, EPA Region 8

The ***Natural News*** has published many articles about the trials and successes of numerous local watershed groups in Region 8. Many of these groups accomplish what they do in large measure thanks to the efforts of their Coordinator or Executive Director (ED). I am using the terms "Watershed Coordinator" and "Executive Director" interchangeably as the person who leads a watershed group. Many groups have only one staff person, who serves in the Coordinator or ED role. I thought it would be appropriate to talk to our readers about what it is that watershed coordinators do. This would be a shorter article if it were entitled, "What watershed coordinators do **not** do."

Describing the "typical" watershed group is difficult. Groups often mobilize around a particular local issue, and then evolve to address the protection needs of the watershed. Watershed coordinators have great, important and extremely challenging jobs. Here is why. The Coordinator's job is very broad and deep. It calls for building and sustaining an organization whose role is complex and important—managing the water resources in the defined watershed. It calls for expertise in a broad array of complex subjects and a sophisticated personal skill set.

In organizing a watershed group, initial questions are often to define the watershed scale, the issues or themes for the group, its structure, who should be involved and who is providing financial assistance. The coordinator has obvious leadership and coordination roles in this phase, and this continues.

Within the broad area encompassing watershed protection, groups commonly get involved in water quality, water supply, water rights, aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wetlands, vegetation, land use, land conservation, ground water, recreation and education. Each of these areas has its own complex set of issues to understand. In addition,

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place. John Wesley Powell put it best when he said that a watershed is:

"that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community."

maturing groups develop boards, and often acquire nonprofit corporation status. Sustaining a group requires that tasks of fundraising, budgeting and managing volunteers be addressed.

The job of the watershed coordinator comes alive in the management/coordination of on-the-ground work. Restoration, vegetation and other physical projects introduce further levels of complexity; but it can be very satisfying to see ecosystem or aquatic functions improved and wildlife or people enjoying the results.

Thus, as the focal point for the group, the coordinator is directly or indirectly responsible for building, leading and sustaining the organization, including planning, fundraising, budgeting, partnering, facilitating, project management, education, public relations, marketing, diplomacy, politicking—and the coordinating and beloved meeting scheduling. This is on top of knowing the ins and outs of the physical subject areas noted above. Now you may see why it is easier to say what coordinators do not do, and why this is a great, hopefully rewarding and very challenging job.

Adaptive Management on the Missouri River

~Jim Berkley, EPA Region 8

EPA staff from Denver and Kansas City are working as part of a broad group of stakeholders on the Missouri River to develop an Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management (AEAM) pilot restoration project. Stakeholders involved in the project include farmers, county commissioners, navigators, commercial boaters, The Nature Conservancy, American Rivers, a Congressional office, the Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, EPA, Natural Resources Conservation Service and University of Nebraska representatives.

AEAM (also know as adaptive management) is an approach to management and assessment of natural resources through science workshops, experiments, and monitoring. Workshops are for the development of a shared understanding of how the river works and the social, economic and scientific dimensions of the problem. The workshops are also used to develop models to assess various ways (alternatives/experiments) to solve problems identified by the participants. The monitoring is used in a "feedback loop" to provide information about whether the experiment is working or should be changed.

EPA's Denver office funded the first workshop, which was held in Nebraska City, Neb., in March 2004. Federal agency participants provided information including scientific information about the river and its biological community, Endangered Species Act requirements, Clean Water Act requirements, the ecosystem management approach versus other approaches, etc. The stakeholders developed a proposal for a pilot restoration project, which has been submitted to EPA Kansas City for possible funding. The stakeholders will work out the details of the project after visits to the field.

This workshop was a first on the Missouri River for three reasons: 1) a broad range of interests came together to develop a shared understanding of how a particular stretch of the river works; 2) stakeholders worked together to develop a proposal; and 3) the analysis will include natural and social sciences along with economic analyses, instead of just natural resource science.

For more information on the ecological issues on the Missouri River, see **http://infolink.cr.usgs.gov/** or **https://www.nwd.usace.army.mil/pa/missouri2003aop.asp**
To find out about adaptive management, go to **http://www.iatp.org/AEAM/**
You may contact **Jim Berkley** at (303)312-7102 or **berkley.jim@epa.gov** for details on the AEAM Project.

Cherry Creek Watershed Group Receives EPA Award

~Marc Alston, EPA Region 8

Max Dodson, Assistant Regional Administrator of EPA Region 8, presented an Environmental Achievement Award July 14, 2004, to the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners for its "Smart Growth for Clean Water" (SGCW) project accomplishments. The Cherry Creek Watershed is located in the Denver, CO metro area.

The SGCW project has made the Stewardship Partners a leader in finding innovative and collaborative solutions to the natural resource impacts of unprecedented growth in the Cherry Creek Watershed. Among many issues in the watershed, excess runoff of phosphorous and other nutrients from developing urban and suburban areas has the potential to degrade water quality and harm a prized community fishery and other aquatic life.

"The Partners is a network of individuals and a forum for improving natural resources stewardship in the Cherry Creek Basin," said Partners Watershed Coordinator and awardee Casey Davenhill. "We're a group of volunteers from government and the private sector who work to leverage resources to provide education and information on the benefits that come from connected open space, trails and neighborhood landscapes."

- Significant SGCW Project accomplishments in the Cherry Creek Basin include:
  Development of a Basin Stewardship Plan (under Trust for Public Land leadership) to protect key riparian, aquatic and upland zones, including quantification of the water quality benefits of smart growth strategies.
- A formalized agreement among Denver, Arapahoe and

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Douglas Counties, and Parker, Centennial, Glendale and Greenwood Village to use comprehensive, integrated approaches to land conservation, water quality protection, public education and recreation in the watershed.

- Creation of a "Phosphorous Facilitator" role to bridge issues between planners and developers, resulting in more environmentally friendly technologies and needed code changes or incentives. This program is now being implemented by the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority.
- Sponsorship of Water Quality Concepts tours on Smart Growth and Open Space for developers and planners to raise awareness of smart growth tools and the value of open space to preserving Cherry Creek's riparian area.

"The SGCW project is just the beginning in our effort to integrate development design with water quality and water resource goals," said Arapahoe County Engineer and awardee Lanae Raymond. "The Partners have committed to 'leave no developer behind' in the smart growth for clean water effort in the basin. If there is a developer who wants to explore innovative designs that increase their bottom line and build community values, we are here to work with them."

"The Partners are very deserving of this award," said EPA's Max Dodson. "The SGCW project has inspired tremendous momentum in addressing impacts from growth on the environmental health of the Cherry Creek Basin."

Team members receiving an award include:

Chris Rowe, CO Watershed Network
Dick Parachini, CO Department of Public Health and Environment
Robert F. McGregor, AMEC
Lanae Raymond, Arapahoe County
Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority
Jim Wulliman, Muller Engineering
Casey Davenhill, Cherry Creek Partners Coordinator
Nissa Maddox, Trust for Public Land
Beth Conover, City and County of Denver (formerly Headwaters)
Terry Baus, City and County of Denver
Toby Sprunk, Douglas County Open Space

For more information, contact **Marc Alston** at (303)312-6356 or **alston.marc@epa.gov**

Four receive Friend of EPA Award for Red River Basin Protection Efforts

~Stacey Eriksen, EPA Region 8

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 Assistant Administrator Max Dodson presented on Sept. 1 the Friend of EPA Award to four individuals in the Red River Basin.

Charles Fritz of the Red River Basin Institute, Genevieve Thompson of Greenway on the Red and Audubon Dakota, and Bob Backman and Christine Holland of River Keepers were presented with the EPA award for efforts to monitor, assess, protect, and preserve the water quality and natural resources of the Red River Basin using a holistic watershed approach.

Max Dodson, from EPA said "Not only have they achieved individual accomplishments for their respective organizations, but they have worked together to leverage resources, dollars and technical expertise. They have developed close partnerships between themselves and other organizations in the Basin."

The Chair of the Red River Basin Institute, former Governor George Sinner called the four honorees heroes because their efforts will benefit the public now and in the future.

The four were honored for multiple accomplishments including establishing a total maximum daily load workgroup, setting up automatic monitoring of the river and using the data to determine the cause of a fish kill, creating a memorandum of understanding between universities in the basin, assisting EPA in its regional bioassessment workshop, establishing volunteer chemical and biological monitoring and posting the data to a website that was used by the ND Department of Health for its list of impaired waters, creating a volunteer water quality monitoring manual used throughout the basin, establishing an annual water festival in which 1,400 students are educated, for mapping wetlands and establishing a 600-mile greenway (of which 150 miles is already completed), developing a greenway nature center, and working closely with Canadian interests on international water quality and treaty issues.

For more information contact **Stacey Eriksen** at **(303) 312-6692** or **eriksen.stacey@epa.gov**

Max Dodson and Stacey Eriksen present EPA Award
~Photo by Prairie Public Broadcasting

New Belgium Brewery Receives EPA Award

~George Parrish, EPA Region 8

EPA Regional Administrator Robbie Roberts presented New Belgium Brewing Co., Inc., of Fort Collins, CO, with an Environmental Achievement Award on July 28, 2004. New Belgium was recognized for its steadfast, innovative and forward-thinking commitment to environmental stewardship as a business through minimizing resource consumption, and maximizing energy efficiency and recycling. New Belgium recently built a Process Water Treatment Plant that treats brewing wastewater, uses bio-gas to run an electrical generator, and recaptures water for reuse in brewery processes.

New Belgium was the first 100% wind-powered brewery in the United States, and now receives about 10% of its electricity needs from the co-generator.

For more information see: **http://www.epa.gov/region8/** or contact **George Parrish** at (303)312-7027.

Kim Jordan, New Belgium Brewery co-founder, accepts the award from RA Roberts.

~ Photo by Jodi Taylor, New Belgium Brewing

Update on Consolidated Funding Process (CFP)

~Cynthia Gonzales, EPA Region 8

Final decisions were made under the EPA Region 8 CFP on May 31, 2004. EPA awarded $2.8 million in four funding areas. The breakout by funding area is as follows:

Regional Geographic Initiative (RGI)	$197,860
National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)	$817,300
Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)	$240,792
Wetlands	$1,585,250

Due to unforeseen budget cuts, CFP final decisions were delayed. However, we gathered the troops and made a gallant effort to restructure the final decisions in record time. RGI funds were cut by 50%. Due to the flexibility of the CFP, we were able to offset some of the 50% cut to RGI using NPDES funds. However, funding was only awarded to those projects that met the NPDES criteria, which limited some of the projects that were initially eligible under RGI.

We are underway with our FY05 process and the **Request for Proposals (RFP) will be out by October 4, 2004.** Please refer to our Web site at the end of this article by mid-September for status updates, examples and information. The RFP will be available through our Web site beginning October 8, 2004. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact **Cynthia Gonzales**, CFP Coordinator at (303) 312-6569. See our website at: **http://www.epa.gov/region8/cfp**

Bear River Basin Receives Watershed Grant

~Gary Kleeman and Frank Montarelli, EPA Region 8

EPA has selected the Bear River Commission, with offices in Bountiful, UT, as the recipient of a $707,581 Targeted Watershed Grant to develop its innovative water-quality trading program to improve water quality in the Bear River Basin. The Bear River project was one of 14 projects to be funded, competing against 114 projects from across the country.

The 7,500-square-mile Bear River Watershed exemplifies many of the complexities faced in water quality management and is an excellent candidate for study and demonstration of how trading based on integrated watershed information and management can improve water quality.

Fifty-two streams and nine lakes in the Bear River Basin are on state lists of impaired waters in three states – Idaho, Utah and Wyoming. Water quality problems include sediment, nutrients, fecal coliform bacteria, low dissolved oxygen and high water temperature. Pollutant sources include animal feeding operations, grazing, agriculture, wastewater treatment, degraded stream banks, urban development, roads, phosphate mining, oil and gas exploration, and logging.

"This targeted grant selection recognizes the efforts of the Bear River Commission and speaks to the progressive approach that this watershed group is taking towards addressing water quality issues," said Max Dodson, U.S. EPA Region 8 Assistant Regional Administrator. "We are encouraged by this integrated and holistic method that will utilize economics of the marketplace based on scientific data and analysis."

The Bear River Commission will develop an integrated Watershed Data Information System and water quality models to support an innovative water quality trading system. An online virtual trading room will be developed

that will provide infrastructure and support for pollutant trading, tracking, and account balancing to address pollution throughout the basin.

This year, $15 million was available for the nationwide competitive grant process with an emphasis placed on funding proposals that included a market-based approach. Selection criteria included innovation, environmental results, broad support, outreach and financial integrity. Selectees demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of watershed ecology, presented a sound approach for combating threats or impairments to the water system and showed they were likely to achieve measurable, quantifiable environmental results in a relatively short time period.

The Targeted Watershed Grant program funds large watershed implementation projects across the country to study promising and innovative watershed-based approaches to improving water quality. Detailed information about these projects and the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program is available at: **http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative** or contact **Gary Kleeman,** (303)312-6246 or **kleeman.gary@epa.gov**

Wetlands in Watersheds

~By Paul McIver, EPA Region 8

Wetlands provide valuable ecological and hydrological functions in a watershed. These functions are not always obvious to the causal observer. They reduce water treatment costs by removing nutrients, organic materials and sediment. Wetlands store water during floods. This reduces the volume and speed of floodwaters and can reduce erosion as well. Wetlands are sources of ground water and surface water, providing for domestic and agricultural uses.

Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge… An urban wetlands which serves a vital role in providing habitat for wildlife and protecting water quality

~Photo by Paul McIver

Wetlands often have rare plants and provide habitat for numerous birds and animals. Since wetlands are biologically diverse, they are important for scientific and educational studies.

One of the hidden functions that certain wetlands can provide is the filtration of metals dissolved in ground and surface waters. Some wetlands are rich in metals such as chromium, molybdenum, and uranium. In these wetlands, the concentration of uranium is in excess of the surrounding bedrock. These metals are cause for concern should they be released as the result of a man-made disturbance. In the mountains of Colorado, some wetlands contain peat that has been harvested as a soil amenity for agriculture and gardens. The draining and mining of the peat may release metals to surface water and ground water and could potentially become a health hazard.

It is important to protect wetlands because of their many functions and values. Learn to recognize the many different kinds of wetlands in your watershed and appreciate their diversity.

See the following documents for more detailed information:

- U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1992 entitled: Uranium and Other Elements in Colorado – Rocky Mountain Wetlands – A Reconnaissance Study
- Geochemical Reconnaissance Study of Vassar Meadow (Adams Rib) Wetlands and Vicinity, Eagle County, Colorado. U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1122.

For more general wetlands information, contact: The **Environmental Information Service Center and Technical Library** at: 1-800-227-8917, or call the **EPA Wetlands Help Line** at: 1-800-832-7828.
See also the EPA's wetlands Home page at: **http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands** , or contact **Paul McIver** at (303)312-6056 or **mciver.paul@epa.gov**

Funding Opportunities

Patagonia Environmental Grants
Patagonia funds environmental work exclusively. They welcome proposals during the months of August and April. Read more at: **http://www.patagonia.com**

EPA Region 8 Grant Writing Workshop, October 27, 2004, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Denver. The Workshop is hosted by the Environmental Justice Program, in collaboration with the Environmental Education, Brownfields, Grants, and Air and Radiation Programs. Learn what grants are available and how to write a Federal grant. Contact **Nancy Reish** at (303)312-6040 or **reish.nancy@epa.gov**

Conferences and Training

Sustainable Resources 2004 Conference, Sept. 29 – Oct. 2 in Boulder, CO For information go to: **https://www.sustainableresources.org**

Navigating the Future, Water Supplies in the South Platte, October 27 – 28, 2004, Longmont, Colo.
The 15th Annual South Platte Forum. For more information call **Jennifer Brown**, South Platte Forum Coordinator, at 402-426-0362 or go to: **http://www.southplatteforum.org**

Mountain Studies Institute Fall 2004 Conference, Sept. 24—26 in Silverton, Colo.
The State of the San Juans, "San Juan Mountains Science and Research: Linking Communities, Researchers and Practitioners." For information see **http://msi.fortlewis.edu** or call (970)387-5165 or E-mail **info@mountainstudies.org**

Publications and Web Resources

~Contributed by Roger Dean, Stacey Eriksen, Jill Minter and Darcy Campbell, EPA Region 8

Save the Date: October 18 is World Monitoring Day
On October 18, citizens of the global community will join in the second World Water Monitoring Day, an opportunity to positively impact the health of rivers, lakes, estuaries and other waterbodies. Volunteer monitoring groups, water quality agencies, students, and the general public are invited to test four key indicators of water quality: temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen and turbidity. Macroinvertebrate (bug) counts are also included. The month-long monitoring window begins on Sept. 18 and concludes Oct. 18. Data reporting continues through December 18 this year. Site registration is now open. You may purchase test kits (each kit costs $19.95 and can repeat up to 50 tests of each parameter) and learn more at: **http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org**

New Version of EnviroMapper for WATERS Database
EnviroMapper for Water provides a Web-based mapping connection to a wealth of water data. You can use it to view and map data, such as the uses assigned to local waters by your state (fishing, swimming, etc.), waters that are impaired and do not support their assigned uses, the reasons why waters are impaired, water quality monitoring information, closures of swimming beaches and the location of dischargers. Go to: **http://www.epa.gov/waters/enviromapper**

New Watershed Academy Module Available on Stream Classification
The newest Watershed Academy online module is now accessible at: **http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/stream_class/**
The module summarizes the basic Level 1 and Level 2 techniques for classifying stream channel types according to the Rosgen classification system.

US Geological Survey Summary Publications
Each publication in the series includes a summary of local water-quality issues and findings. Issues discussed include nutrients, pesticides, volatile organic compounds, radon, and suspended sediment in ground water and surface water; and semivolatile organic compounds, organochlorine compounds, and trace elements in bed sediment and aquatic biota. Go to **http://water.usgs.gov/nawqasum**

New Stream Restoration Materials from Center for Watershed Protection (CWP)
EPA funded the CWP to create a series of 11 manuals called the "Urban Subwatershed Restoration Manual Series." The series is designed to provide a stronger foundation to assist local and state managers in crafting urban watershed restoration plans. Each manual is approximately 100-pages long, and some also include a CD with software to enable data collection and storage.

The **first three were published in March 2004** and can be downloaded free for the next six months at:
http://www.cwp.org
Five additional manuals are scheduled for release later this summer and early fall, and the remaining three will be released some time after that. The first three manuals are:
1. An Integrated Framework to Restore Small Urban Watersheds
2. Methods to Develop Restoration Plans for Small Urban Watersheds
3. Storm Water Retrofit Practices

After the Storm Video Available. Copies of **"After the Storm,"** a documentary co-produced by EPA and the Weather Channel about polluted stormwater runoff, are available on VHS tape. To order a copy, please contact EPA's National Service Center for Environmental Publications at 1-800-490-9198 or send an email to **ncepimal@one.net.** Please request "After the Storm - VHS" - EPA 840-V-04-001. For more information visit **http://www.epa.gov/weatherchannel**

"The rivers are our brothers. They quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember and teach your children, that the rivers are our brothers and yours, and you must give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother."

--Chief Seattle, 1854

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Natural News

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If you have an article concerning ecosystem protection, community based environmental protection, or watersheds; we would like to hear from you!

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Ecosystem Stewardship on the web: http://www.epa.gov/region8/community_resources/steward/est.html

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